

563 But proofs of their increase are the hundreds of new villages tilled
361 by Kurds and built by them in the regions of Kubur el Bid, Amuda,
and Derbassiya.

621 The Kurds like the Arabs, follow a tribal organization. Starting
221 from the east, the Koshar tribe, mostly nomadic but recently turning
619 to agriculture, dominates Jazirat Ibn Amr, i.e., the region of
721 Deink and Ain Diwar. The Koshar border Shammar on the south and
they are on fighting terms because Nayefz Pasha, chief of the Koshar,
killed the brother of Dham, chief of Shammar. Next to the west is
the Shitiya tribe around Kubur el Bid. This tribe is old in the region.

[291] Its members are Arab in their dress and, in contrast with all the other
191 Kurdish tribes, they speak Arabic as well as Kurdish. Its lands lie
west of Shammar and more within the Tay region but its relations
with both are friendly.

619 Qamishli, which is a Tay region, includes villages of the Pinar
361 Ali tribe. But west of Qamishli comes a solid bloc of 100% Kurdish
villages extending for more than sixty kilometers and reaching to
the west of Dirbassiya practically uninterrupted by any Arab village.
[134] This area is undoubtedly one of the most fertile of Jazirah. Within
it, the Dakkuriya tribe is centered around Amuda, then follow the
Kikiya around Dirbassiya, and the Milliya from Dirbassiya to Ras el
Ain.

463 The Kurds are considered very good farmers. They plow and
241 plant with mules but they rent combines for the harvest. This is
577 because they have learned that combine harvest is more economic-
511 al. The Kurd is also greatly praised for his character. He is truth-
ful, honest, and upright in his dealings. He keeps his word and the
merchants of the Jazir trust him completely. He is also clean in
his home and in his dress, and though Bedouins reproach him for not
being generous in his house, his standard of living is higher than the
Bedouin and his villages are much cleaner.

622 The Kurds owe allegiance to their Agha who takes the place of
423 the Bedouin Sheik. But this relationship is weaker than is the case
of the Bedouins. The successive Governments did not give the Agha
grants of money or similar authority over his tribesmen in the man-
ner of the Sheik. The Kurds were considered from the start seden-
tary people subject directly to Government laws. That is why most
of the Kurds own and till their lands in their own right.

III The Shashans

163 The Shashans, a Circassian tribe around Ras el Ain, complete
 167 the rural population of Jazirah. They migrated to Syria during the
 463 Ottoman rule and settled as mercenary soldiers. They are not good
 134 at agriculture and their lands are not fertile and do not compare with
 those of the Kurds.

IV. The Christians

1621 The cities and commercial centers of Jazirah are an extra-or-
 361 dinary mixture of races and creeds, but they are perhaps more than
 80% Christian. This is true of Kubur el Bid, Qamishli, Amunda, Dir-
 bassiya and Hassakeh.

361 As in the case of the Kurds, the Turkish massacres of the Christ-
 167 ians in Mardin and the mountainous country around it started their
 463 migration to Jazirah. The Christians reached Jazirah without proper-
 439 ty or capital with which to begin. They settled mostly in the towns
 mentioned. A few of them already owned lands, others were traders
 and had previous relations with the Bedouins and Kurdish tribes. In
 a relatively short time the towns grew and flourished. The Christians
 prospered from commerce before the expansion of agriculture. The
 tariff differences between Syria and Turkey on such important com-
 modities as sugar, tea, and coffee and the intermingling of the Kurd-
 ish population on both sides of the frontier, made the Jazirah towns
 ideal for an extensive smuggling business.

438 The town Christians also served as middlemen to the merchants
 463 of Aleppo, who provided the money to lend to the Bedouins and Kurds
 452 or to buy the sheep, cattle and crops. This work on a commission
 439 or partnership basis coupled with the smuggling business proved profit-
 able to the merchants of Jazirah, so that during the last twenty years
 many of them have become wealthy and have come to own real estate
 and agricultural lands and machinery without, however, abandoning
 their commercial activities with the merchants of Aleppo. In fact,
 the general prosperity and development of Jazirah has increased its
 need for the credit of Aleppo.

1621 This picture of the Christian population of Jazirah is not complete
 163 without mention of the Christian peasants who migrated from the
 191 mountain villages and settled in the country. Though Christian and
 795 living in villages 100% Christian, some of them are Kurdish in their
 language, dress and customs. Some other villages are populated

by Syriac Christians who speak Syriac and Arabic. A few villages are completely Armenian. Most of these villages are around Kubur el Bid and Qamishli. These Christian peasants are very devout. They are also conservative and always remember the injuries inflicted upon them in Turkey. There is hardly a Christian family in the towns or villages which did not lose a relative or a friend in the massacres. Therefore they are always on their guard against their Moslem neighbors and are always suspicious of the Government. Their bitterness is not likely to disappear for some time to come, and is a factor to be considered in the political development of Jazirah.

The Christians of Jazirah belong to all creeds and denominations. The largest community in numbers and in importance is the Syriac Orthodox, followed by the Armenian Orthodox. There are Chaldeans, Syriac Catholics, Armenian Catholics, Protestants, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, and Nestorians. It should be mentioned that what determines the origin and affiliation of a man in Jazirah is not his language or dress, but his Church. Thus a Kurd who speaks only the Kurdish language, who lives like a Kurd on the same standard of living, and who dresses like one, is yet an Armenian or a Chaldean or a Jacobite because he belongs to one of these Churches. His original language and customs have been lost by living for ages in a foreign environment. That is why one finds in Jazirah and the mountains beyond it the only Christian Kurds in the world. But in reality they are not Kurds. They are Armenians or Syriacs or Chaldeans who have adopted the Kurdish language and their true nationality can be known only by referring to their Churches.

A more recent concentration of Christians in Jazirah is constituted by the Assyrians around Tal Tamr on the Khabur. Following the massacre of the Assyrians in Iraq in 1933 and their expulsion from that country, the French in Syria gave them asylum, and the League of Nations appropriated funds to settle them along the Khabur.

Lands were granted to them and villages were built in which motors and pumps were installed for irrigation. Nevertheless during these 19 years all the efforts appear to have been useless. The ten thousand Assyrians who migrated to Syria lead a wretched life. Their motors are not in a working condition, their crops are not abundant and they are now trying to sell their lands. The reasons for such a condition may be found in the fact that the Assyrians are not farmers and the lands given to them are of a poor quality.

During the French Mandate, the Christians of Jazirah, with the memory of the Turkish massacres still fresh, and considering all

177 seventeenth century, but it was only in the eighteen-thirties that
 178 conditions arose in which their numbers and influence could
 179 increase; and it was during the same decade that American
 180 Protestant schools became important. During the second half
 of the century a new step was taken, with the creation in 1866
 of the institution which subsequently became the American
 University of Beirut; nine years later, in 1875, the Jesuit
 college which was later to become the Université de S. Joseph,
 was transferred to Beirut from Ghazir, where it had been
 established in 1843. Towards the end of the century Russian,
 German and other religious schools were established, the
 French Mission Laïque began its work, and the Ottoman
 Government itself started to create schools and colleges on
 Western lines.

181 The spread of Western education, the growth of commercial
 182 relations with Western countries and other factors brought
 183 into existence a class of people who knew French, English and
 other European languages, often as well as and sometimes
 better than their native Arabic. Knowledge of these lan-
 guages gave them the key to a whole new world of ideas and
 images.

184 The spread of Western ideas, the rediscovery and publication
 185 of the Arab classics by Western orientalists, the introduction
 186 of the printing-press and the establishment of newspapers and
 periodicals led to a revival of Arabic literature. At the begin-
 ning of the nineteenth century the creative use of the classical
 Arabic language had almost entirely ceased. The old authors
 were scarcely read; such poetry and prose as were produced
 were imitations of archaic models; except for religious schools,
 which mainly confined themselves to the memorization of the
 Quran, no sort of literary education existed. But gradually
 what had been dead came to life again. Around the mission-
 schools in Beirut gathered a group of Syrian writers, most of
 them Christians, who set themselves to evolve a modern Arabic
 idiom and style suitable for the expression of Western ideas,
 and to use the instrument thus created to familiarize the Arabs
 with the civilization of Europe and to render them conscious
 of their own problems. At the same time another group was
 being created in Cairo by means of the schools, educational
 missions and translations initiated or encouraged by Muham-
 mad Ali and his successors; similar to the Beirut group in
 many ways, it differed from it by a greater concern with the

^S
⁷⁹⁵
⁵⁶³
^L
⁷⁹⁵
⁵⁶³ last war, when they were dislodged from their original homes in the Kurdish mountains; the Chaldeans have lived in the Mosul area of Iraq for many centuries. In 1933 a period of tension between a section of the Assyrians and the Iraqi Government ended with the killing of some hundreds of them by Iraqi troops. Several thousands in consequence crossed the frontier into Syria, and although some of them later returned to Iraq, others were settled in the Jazirah with assistance from the League of Nations. Their settlement became an integral part of the Syrian State in 1942.

A large part of the Syrian Orthodox and Catholics still speak Syriac. They have been settled since before the coming of Islam in north Syria and south Turkey, in and around the Taurus hills, against which the wave of Arab influence exhausted itself. Thus they have been able to preserve their Syriac dialect which farther south has been replaced almost everywhere by Arabic. Many are, however, bilingual in Arabic and Syriac, and others have abandoned Syriac and are now Arabic-speaking.

^S
^L
¹⁹¹
^S
^L
⁵⁶³ There are certain other groups which resemble the Armenians and Assyrians in not being Arabic-speaking, but unlike them are orthodox Moslems. The most important of them are:

- (i) The Kurds, of whom there are perhaps 200,000.¹ They are mountaineers from the high country which links the Anatolian and Persian plateaux, and speak a dialect akin to Persian. Some of them have long been resident in the country, but others have emigrated in the last twenty years from their homes in the mountains of eastern Turkey, in order to escape the repressive measures of the Turkish Government. There are small numbers of Kurdish-speaking Yazidis, Alawis and Christians, but most of those who speak Kurdish as their native language are Sunnis.
- (ii) The Turcomans, who number perhaps 30,000. They came originally from Central Asia, and their language is a dialect of Turkish. Originally nomads, they have now become semi-sedentary or wholly sedentary cultivators of the soil.

¹ These figures are only rough estimates; there are no official statistics for national and racial minorities.

873 of the property, the finances, and the philanthropic and educational activi-
 795 ties of the church. A board of five men, all laymen, is chosen by the council to have charge of the schools. These 6 schools make a complete kindergarten, primary, and secondary ladder by themselves, consisting of 2 boys primary schools, 2 girls primary schools (1 of which is topped by an intermediate section), a coeducational primary school, and a complete secondary school for boys. Girls leaving the girls intermediate may join the secondary classes at the boys secondary school, and in 1945-46 there were 5 girls who had done this.

The schools are supported by fees, by income from the church endowment and property, by grants from the government, and by contributions. The buildings are owned by the Greek Orthodox church and community. The student body, though predominately Greek Orthodox, has students from other denominations. The boys secondary school, for example, has about 40 Muslims, 25 Jews, and 20 Catholics. The teaching staff of the school is also mixed: 16 Greek Orthodox, 5 Muslims, 2 Jews, and 3 Catholics. Fees are £56 to £90 in the primary schools and £20 to £200 in the secondary schools.

All pupils whose families receive help from the welfare society of the Greek Orthodox community are exempt from fees. Other pupils pay according to ability after inquiry by the priests and the committee.

In general, the curriculum follows that of the government, but with two important differences. French is begun in the first primary grade, and English in the first secondary grade. Arabic reading is begun toward the end of the first kindergarten year and continued in the second kindergarten year. By the time the children enter first grade, they know how to read. The first grade is, therefore, in reality equivalent to the second grade of the government schools; and, although the primary school is nominally five years, it is in actual fact six years. The first-grade children appear to be above the average age. This procedure may perhaps have been necessitated by the early teaching of French.

513 The problem of teaching a multiplicity of languages in primary schools
 873 is found in an extreme form in Armenian schools. The largest Armenian
 191 community in Syria is in Aleppo where Armenians took refuge after the
 Armenian massacres in Turkey during the First World War. Anxious to preserve their national language and to know the language of the country of their adoption, they have had to teach both Arabic and Armenian. At the same time the advantages that accrued to those who knew French under the mandate made them introduce that language into their schools, while the fact that most Armenian youth who wanted to continue their

162 dwell in the Khabour river basin. The Syrian
167 Orthodox and Catholic churches flourish in
the north, where the inhabitants of many
mountain villages employ Syriac dialects,
[191] preserved since pre-Islamic times.

795 Prominent among the Moslem minorities
are the Alawites and the Druzes. Although
both are scattered throughout the country,
they are found primarily in the provinces;
which, under the Mandate, were semi-
autonomous units of the Levant. The Ala-
wites inhabit the province of Latakia, com-
prising the coastal plain and a large part
of the Orontes river valley, where they
represent about 70 per cent of the popula-
tion. The Druzes form a closely knit reli-
gious community which migrated to the
Jebel ed Drus highlands from Lebanon in
the last century.

162 Several racial and linguistic minority
groups are contained in the orthodox Mos-
lem majority. About 200,000 Kurds reside
in Syria, chiefly in Aleppo and Al Jazira
provinces and in the city of Damascus. A
large proportion have lived for generations
on the fringes of Kurdistan, within the pres-
ent [161] boundaries of Syria, but some are recent
colonists from eastern Turkey to the Al
Jazira area, where they constitute a con-
siderable part of the population. Smaller
non-Arabic-speaking groups include about
30,000 Turkomans, settled around Aleppo
and in the Orontes river valley, and almost
20,000 Circassians, found along the northern
frontier and in the Euphrates river basin.

Over three quarters of the population
live in the western and the northwestern
provinces, with the greatest concentration
in the coastal region, in the vicinity of
Damascus and Aleppo, and in the Homs
and the Hama areas. In the interior, the
settled districts are limited to the river
valleys, while the steppe and the desert
country to the east and the south constitute
the home of nomadic Bedouin tribes. In
1948, the density of population in Latakia
was estimated at 215 per square mile. In
the province of Aleppo it was 113 per square
mile; in the province of Damascus, 90 per

874 graduates are required to serve an additional year in an approved hospital before they are registered to practice. The instruction in the University is in Arabic, although [190] French and English are employed in technical terms and phraseology.

Schools of dentistry, pharmacy and nursing also function within the Faculty of Medicine. The School of Nursing is associated with the National Hospital, which is operated by the medical faculty. The course of training covers three years, with provision for a fourth year in midwifery. Practical nurses' training programs for girls are carried on in a few private institutions. Courses for the training of male nurses are furnished in all the larger government hospitals.

PERSONNEL

759 Physicians. Between 670 and 726 physicians were practicing in Syria in 1951. The majority were established in the larger towns and cities. Approximately one half of the total were located in the province of Damascus and over one quarter in the province of Aleppo. The medical personnel of the Ministry of Health numbered 135, including 6 doctors on the headquarters administrative staff and 7 or 8 in the government laboratories. Five doctors were connected with the municipal health organization in Damascus, 5 in Aleppo and 1 each in Homs and Hama.

Dentists. From 175 to 209 dentists were registered in the country. About 75 per cent resided in Damascus, the remainder in Aleppo.

Nurses. In 1951, also, there were 352 male and female nurses. About 62 female nurses and an equal number of male nurses were employed by the Ministry of Health.

244 Others. From 148 to 210 graduate midwives, the majority of whom had preliminary nursing training, were practicing in Syria. They were about equally divided between the provinces of Damascus and Aleppo. Large numbers of untrained midwives worked in the rural villages in all

p. 148 (A)